

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (original) An energy absorber for an instrument panel assembly comprising an elongate instrument panel beam structure, and a knee bolster, said energy absorber comprising a thermoplastic structure configured to attach to the instrument panel beam structure, said energy absorber thermoplastic structure comprising:

a plurality of sides; and

a plurality of web members, at least some web members extending between said plurality of sides.

2. (original) An energy absorber in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said energy absorber thermoplastic structure comprises at least one position tab.

3. (currently amended) An energy absorber in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said plurality of sides comprise a substantially box shaped configuration, a substantially M-shaped configuration or a substantially W-shaped configuration.

4. (original) An energy absorber in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said plurality of web members comprise a honeycomb configuration.

5. (original) An energy absorber for an instrument panel assembly, said energy absorber comprising a thermoplastic structure comprising:

a plurality of sides; and

a plurality of web members, said plurality of web members comprising a honeycomb configuration.

6. (original) An energy absorber in accordance with Claim 5 wherein said thermoplastic structure comprises at least one position tab.

7. (original) An energy absorber for an instrument panel assembly, said energy absorber comprising a thermoplastic structure comprising a plurality of sides, said plurality of sides comprising a substantially box shaped configuration, a substantially M-shaped configuration or a substantially W-shaped configuration.

8. (original) An energy absorber in accordance with Claim 7 further comprising a plurality of web members, at least some web members extending between said plurality of sides.

9. (original) An energy absorber in accordance with Claim 8 wherein said plurality of web members comprise a honeycomb configuration.

10. (original) An instrument panel assembly comprising:

an elongate beam structure;

a plurality of thermoplastic energy absorbers attached to said beam structure, said plurality of thermoplastic energy absorbers comprise a plurality of sides and a plurality of web members, at least some web members extending between said plurality of sides;

at least one knee bolster positioned adjacent said plurality of thermoplastic energy absorbers; and

an instrument panel.

11. (canceled)

12. (currently amended) An instrument panel assembly in accordance with Claim [[11]] 10 wherein said plurality of web members comprise a honeycomb configuration.

13. (original) An instrument panel assembly in accordance with Claim 10 further comprising a center stack coupled to said beam structure.

14. (original) An instrument panel assembly in accordance with Claim 13 wherein said center stack comprises an extruded thermoplastic center stack sized to receive vehicle system controls.

15. (original) An instrument panel assembly in accordance with Claim 10 wherein said beam structure comprises at least one longitudinal channel.

16. (original) An instrument panel assembly in accordance with Claim 15 wherein said energy absorbers comprise at least one position tab sized and shaped to be received in said at least one longitudinal channel of said beam structure.

17. (original) An instrument panel assembly in accordance with Claim 15 wherein said beam structure comprises a continuous profile thermoplastic beam structure.

18. (original) An instrument panel assembly in accordance with Claim 10 wherein said plurality of energy absorbers coupled to said beam structure by at least one of adhesive bonding, heat bonding, vibration welding and fasteners.

19. (original) An instrument panel assembly in accordance with Claim 15 wherein said beam structure comprises an extruded or roll-formed metal beam structure.

20. (canceled)

21. (canceled)

22. (currently amended) An instrument panel assembly in accordance with Claim [[21]] 17 wherein said energy absorbers comprise at least one position tab sized and shaped to be received in said at least one longitudinal channel of said continuous profile thermoplastic beam structure.

23. (currently amended) An instrument panel assembly in accordance with Claim [[21]] 17 further comprising an extruded thermoplastic center stack coupled to said continuous profile thermoplastic beam structure.

24. (original) An instrument panel assembly in accordance with Claim 23 wherein said center stack comprises at least one position tab sized and shaped to be received in said longitudinal channel of said continuous profile thermoplastic beam structure.

25. (currently amended) An instrument panel assembly in accordance with Claim [[20]] 17 wherein said plurality of extruded thermoplastic energy absorbers are coupled to said continuous profile thermoplastic beam structure by at least one of adhesive bonding, heat bonding, vibration welding and fasteners.

26. (currently amended) An instrument panel assembly in accordance with Claim [[20]] 10 wherein said plurality of ~~web members comprise a honeycomb~~ sides comprise a substantially box shaped configuration, a substantially M-shaped configuration or a substantially W-shaped configuration.